

Washington, D.C. -- Today, Representative Xavier Becerra (CA-31), Vice Chair of the House Democratic Caucus and Ranking Member of the Social Security Subcommittee, delivered the following remarks on the House floor in opposition to the House Republican budget plan that would end the Medicare guarantee:

"Mr. Speaker, I stand in strong opposition to the Republican Budget that we are considering here today.

"How easy it is for some to forget that when President Bush took office we had surpluses as far as the eye could see, and when President Bush left office we were left with a deep pool of red ink.

"My friends on the other side of the aisle talk about the urgency of reducing our deficits, but where were my deficit-concerned colleagues when Congress passed tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans adding trillions to the deficit? Where were my deficit-concerned colleagues when President Bush took us into two wars without paying for either?"

"I find it hard to believe that after voting time and again to add trillions to the deficit that the only solution they offer to create economic growth in this country is to end Medicare and to handout more tax cuts to the wealthiest among us.

"The Republican vision in this budget doesn't reflect the America that I grew up in, and their vision of an America—an America that can't—is not the country that I want my children to inherit.

"Budgets are about choices, and this Republican budget chooses millionaires over seniors and oil subsidies over college dreams for our middle class."

"The same Republican budget that replaces the Medicare guarantee and gives us CouponCare, that immediately and dramatically increases seniors' health care costs and that cuts college aid for over 9 million students and slashes investments in our K-12 schools, turns around and showers hundreds of thousands of dollars in tax cuts on millionaires and billionaires. "

"You can't make this stuff up."

"What's most astonishing to me about this budget is the absence of any talk about real Americans – those fighting to hold onto their jobs and their homes.

"America has always been the land of opportunity, where those who work hard and play by the rules have the chance to succeed and to achieve the American Dream."

"Instead of turning America into a can't-do country, where you dismantle Medicare and Medicaid and programs to help our kids go to college and all the institutes of health and those that do research for us, we should recognize this is a great country. We need to come together in this debate with the conviction that America's best days are yet to come."

"I urge my colleagues to vote against this can't-do Republican budget and for the Democratic alternative."